TRIP GUIDE

KURANDA SCENIC RAILWAY EST. 1891

Kuranda Station

KURANDA STATION
Kuranda Skyrail Terminal

Port Douglas

Cairns Northern Beaches

Rainforestation

Caravonica Skyrail Terminal

Tjapukai

Barron Falls Station is a photographic stop; the falls are 327 metres above sea level with the drop 265 metres. In the early days, a 'Flying Fox' traversed the gorge providing a way to transport supplies, livestock and people across river.

Robb's Monument is an impressive rock formation that was left during the building of the railway and serves as a monument to John Robb's engineering prowess.

Barron Gorge Hydro Electric Station was Australia's first underground power station. Construction started in 1932 with electricity supply commencing in 1935. This station generates 60 megawatts of renewable green energy.

Tunnel #15 is the longest tunnel at 490 metres. It has three curves and 11 safety culverts built to prevent anyone being trapped by an oncoming train. During construction, this tunnel collapsed, and seven lives were lost.

Glacier Rock & Red Bluff are two distinctive landmarks. The grey face of Glacier Rock is made up of decomposed granite and Red Bluff forms the steepest part of the Barron Gorge's mountainside.

Before/after **Tunnel #14** presents a vantage point to view the Coral Sea and Cairns city. Directly below are the suburbs of Lake Placid and Kamerunga, which was the site of the original supply depot used during the railway construction.

Freshwater Station was built to characterise the history of Kuranda Scenic Railway. This was the first point where 'fresh' water could be obtained by the navvies before heading up the Kuranda Range.

Tunnel #6 in 1973, masked bandits held up a railmotor here as it transferred wages to businesses in the Tablelands. They escaped on trail bikes and have never been brought to justice.

Stoney Creek Falls bridge is the most outstanding feature of the railway line. After its completion, a marquee was erected and a special lunch was organised for the then Governor, Sir Henry Norman and dignitaries.

Stoney Creek Station was prominent during the railway construction. A busy township flourished on the side of the gorge. Several amusement halls, pubs and a Methodist Church once existed here.

FRESHWATER STATION

Redlynch, named after the 'red haired' Irish Foreman of the Railway Construction. His name was Lynch, but was nicknamed 'Red' because of his hair. When workers were told to go to Redlynch they thought it was the place not person. When it came time to officially name this area, the name Redlynch was already widely known.

Tunnel #1 is the first of 15 hand-carved tunnels. The original plan was for 19 but four were replaced as cuttings. Sand from the Barron River and concrete was transported by wagons and then transferred to mules to be forwarded along the cliff-faces to the various worksites.

Horseshoe Bend begins the steep climb to Kuranda and features a 180-degree bend with a five chain (100.58m) radius curve. This site was known as **Jungara** during World War II with the largest field hospital treating injured soldiers in the Southern Hemisphere.

CAIRNS STATION

Cairns Station's original 1886 station was a timber two storey building located at the end of Shields Street. It has undergone many changes since. The current station location was moved from McLeod Street and rebuilt in 1995.

BARRON GORGE NATIONAL PARK

Established in 1940, the Barron Gorge National Park incorporates 2,820 hectares and was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1988.

It is located 18 kilometres northwest of Cairns and is one of Queensland's most popular parks made up of rugged mountains, ravines, waterfalls, magnificent rainforest and varied rare plant and animal species.

Geology

The landscape of Barron Gorge National Park began to form about 400 million years ago under the sea, when Australia was still part of the great super-continent, Gondwana. Ancient rivers carried sediments to the coast, which was then more than 100 kilometres west of its present position.

SAFETY ON BOARD

Safety is Queensland Rail's number one priority!

Please take a minute to look at the information below.

Grabrails: Please use the grabrails when moving on or off the train (especially in wet weather!)

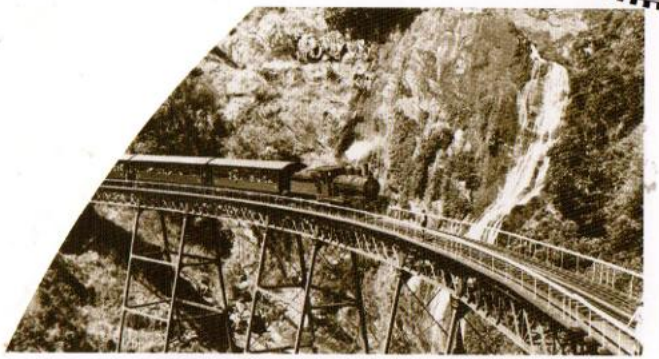
Doors and Carriage Walkways: Do NOT open external doors or gates when the train is moving. **Do NOT** stand on the connecting walkways between carriages as they move.

Windows: Please **Do NOT** lean any part of your body out of the carriage windows.

Arrivals: Please wait until the train has come to a complete stop before disembarking.

Barron Falls Station Arrival:
Please take caution - there is a gap between the train and low platform.

History of Kuranda Scenic Railway



The Railway

Construction of the Cairns-Kuranda Railway was, and still is, an engineering feat of tremendous magnitude.

This enthralling chapter in the history of North Queensland stands as testimony to the splendid ambitions, fortitude and suffering of the hundreds of men engaged in its construction. It also stands as a monument to the many men who lost their lives on this amazing project.

In 1873 the cry of "gold!" echoed through the mountains. Primitive supply routes from the coast to the swelling gold fields were slow and perilous. In 1882 a devastating wet season brought misery to the blossoming townships. Supply routes were impassable and thousands of people came close to starvation. A reliable supply route had to be found.

Legendary bushman Christie Palmerston was tasked to find a route for a railway to link the rich mining belt to the sea. In 1887 construction commenced on one of the most ambitious railway projects ever undertaken.

The Carriages

The carriages you are travelling in date back to the early 1900s, the earliest being BL520 built in July 1909, BLH 579 in August 1911 and BLH750 and 752 in October 1913.

Each carriage is made from Silky Oak timber, but today more sustainable timbers are used in their upkeep.

The train you are travelling on today is made up of one or two 1720 class locomotives and up to 15 heritage coaches.

The Locomotives

The 1720 class locomotives, built between 1966 and 1970 by Commonwealth Engineering, Rocklea, Brisbane under contract from the Clyde Engineering Company were introduced to eliminate the remaining steam locomotives from Brisbane suburban services.

They found their way to the rural branch lines when displaced from Brisbane duties after the system was electrified in the late 1970's.

Train Trivia

Builder: Clyde-EMD/ComEng Qld
Model: GL18C **Type:** Co-Co Diesel Electric
Engine: EMD 8-645E 2 stroke V8
Traction power: 1000 hp (745 kW)
Length: 12.34m **Weight:** 63 tonnes

tripadvisor ksr.com.au QueenslandRail Travel

The Track

Kuranda Scenic Railway travels on a narrow gauge which measures 1067mm (3ft 6in). Before 1901, each of the six British colonies was responsible for rail transport infrastructure. Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania constructed narrow gauge railways. The other colonies built standard gauge or broad gauge railways. As a result of this legacy, Australian railways are a mix of all three gauges.

The Kuranda track is a National Engineering Landmark and tribute to all those who laboured in its construction. The Kuranda Station's Heritage-listed Signal Cabin building and 37 lever frame, is only one of nine in Queensland which is operational and used daily for train movements in Kuranda.

Track Trivia

Labour: 1500 men (majority of Irish and Italian decent)
Distance: Cairns – Kuranda 33 kilometres of track
Ascent: 327 metres above sea level

Engineering & Earthworks: Removal of 2.3 million cubic metres of earth,106 cuttings, 15 hand carved tunnels (1746m in length), 55 bridges (244m of steel bridge spans and 1894m of timber bridges), 98 curves.

Stoney Creek Falls bridge: Completed in the mid 1890s and stands on three trestle piers. The bridge has a tight four chain (80.46m) radius.